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AUTHOR Baine, David
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ABSTRACT

This book chapter provides a checklist of various considerations related to the development and evaluation of community-based instruction for children with disabilities. The checklist is designed to serve as an organizational framework for persons wishing to make systematic decisions regarding the establishment of a community-based instructional program or to guide the evaluation of such a program. The checklist is not designed to be used as a rating instrument, as there are no universally acceptable criteria for evaluating the items on the list. The checklist covers: (1) selection, preparation, and management of instructional environments; (2) environmental inventories; (3) administrative considerations such as legal, financial, policy, type and training of personnel, and personnel roles; (4) transportation; (5) program goals, objectives, and IEPs (individualized education plans); (6) social validation; (7) instructional factors such as delivery, grouping, and scheduling methods; and (8) reinforcement and correction. (11 references) (JDD)

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Chapter 4
Guide to the Development and Evaluation of Community-Based Instruction

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David Baine
Educational Psychology
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

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The author provides a checklist of various considerations related to the development and evaluation of community-based instruction: selection, preparation and management of instructional environments; environmental inventories; administrative considerations: legal, financial, policy, type and training of personnel, and personnel roles; transportation; program goals, objectives and IEPs; social validation; instructional: delivery, grouping, and scheduling bs methods; reinforcement and correction.

Brown et al. (1983), arguing in favor of nonschool instruction, wrote:

> Envision someone who can learn, but who cannot learn as much as 99% of his or her age peers; who needs more time and trials to learn and to relearn than almost all other persons; who remembers some things but forgets more than almost all other persons; who has difficulty transferring that learned in one environment to another; and who rarely synthesizes skills acquired from several different experiences so as to function effectively in a novel situation. Then, ask the question: How much instructional time should be spent in the physical space of a school, and how much should be spent providing direct, individualized, longitudinal, comprehensive, and systematic instruction in the actual nonschool environments in which that someone currently functions and those in which s/he is likely to function upon graduation? (p. 74)

The answers to the foregoing questions are obvious. It is also readily apparent that community-based activities should not be merely field trips. Simply exposing students to community environments does not insure efficient or successful skill acquisition. Thus, the following pages provide a comprehensive checklist of considerations related to the development and evaluation of effective and efficient community-based instruction. To avoid making the checklist unduly awkward and long, sources of information have not been acknowledged in context. The reader is referred to the excellent sources of information in the list of references, particularly the materials written by Sailor, Anderson, Halverson, Doering, Filler, Goetz, Hunt, and Gee.

The reader may initially feel overwhelmed by the length and detail of the checklist. It should be noted, however, that if one were to list all the considerations and decisions required to drive to work each day, the list would be similarly overwhelming; nevertheless, in spite of the number of considerations, most of us have learned to drive to work without undue difficulty.

Several important considerations in the development and implementation of any new program are: (a) identify reasonable goals (partial implementation or small-scale pilot projects), (b) determine priorities, (c) establish reasonable time-lines, (d) insure adequate staff preparation, and (e) be prepared to adjust the program. These considerations apply to the establishment and implementation of a community-based instructional program.

The checklist may be used to establish community-based instruction or to guide the evaluation of such a program. The checklist may be reviewed to identify techniques, materials or other considerations that may be relevant to the establishment or evaluation of particular programs. Users may simply proceed through the list checking each of the instructional considerations thought to be relevant to a particular program being developed or evaluated. It should be noted that the checklist is not designed to be used as a rating instrument. There are no universally acceptable criteria for evaluating the items in the list. Community-based instruction is in its early stages of development, and there is little research to support the various models that have emerged (Sailor, Goetz, Anderson, & Gee, 1988). The perceived value of any instructional feature will reflect the knowledge and judgment of the reviewer, his or her theoretical orientation and expertise, the nature of the learner(s) being instructed, and the particular skills being taught. In essence, the present checklist serves as an organizational framework for persons wishing to make systematic decisions regarding the establishment of a community-based instructional program or to guide to the evaluation of such a program. An asterisk following some terms refers the reader to notes at the end of the chapter.

Note that the items listed in the checklist are not exhaustive. Users may wish to add or delete checklist items depending upon their unique circumstances. Space has been left for the addition of other considerations.

Instructional Environments

(a) *Location*: indicate percentage of time students spend in each: segregated classrooms ___%; integrated classrooms ___%; school/non-classroom ___%: (kitchen ___%, bathroom ___%, hallways ___%, library ___%, auditorium ___%, bus area ___%, gym ___%, locker room ___%, lunch room ___%); general community ___%: recreational ___%, residential ___%, vocational ___%; specialized instructional environment* ___%;

Other: _____

_____

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group home ___%, family home ___%, apartment ___%, shopping centre or mall ___%; grocery, clothing, drug, shoe or fast-food stores ___%; laundromats ___%; recreation, bowling or swimming centres ___%, arcades ___%, parks and playgrounds ___%, places of worship ___%.

Other: _____

_____

(b) *Environmental management*: are segregated instructional environments simulated? Y___, N___; if yes, what features of the instructional environment are parallel to those in natural environments: social (number and type of people) ___, spatial (complexity and organization of environment) ___, physical (amount and type of equipment, materials) ___, temporal (number, rate and duration of events) ___, sensory (amount and type of visual, auditory stimulation ___?

Other: _____

_____

Are integrated instructional environments natural ___ or controlled ___: e.g., organized to insure that certain events do/do not occur ___; environmental adaptations are made to enhance instruction: social ___, spatial ___, physical ___, temporal ___, sensory ___; members of community collaborate (e.g., play roles ___); environmental adaptations are temporary ___ permanent ___?

Other: _____

_____

(c) *Environmental inventory*: a preinstructional inventory is used to gather information on: physical accessibility ___ (e.g., doorways ___, bathrooms ___, aisles ___, methods of travel between floors ___); commonly occurring events ___ (e.g., nature ___, frequency ___ and schedule ___ of events); low and high use times ___; locations for specialized instructional environments* ___;

location of toilets ___; adapted bathrooms ___; eating areas ___; areas for relaxation ___; places for meeting, planning or preparation ___;

common dangers ___; emergency exits ___; emergency personnel (first-aid, police) ___; ambulance loading points ___; location of telephones ___; determine how to clearly describe location ___;

naturally occurring routines* ___; natural cues that signal each part of each routine ___; natural cues indicating performance errors ___; natural reinforcers ___: (type ___, frequency ___, amount ___, and method of delivery ___);

components of naturally occurring routines* are identified: natural *initiating cues* (e.g., dirty teeth following eating) ___; *preparatory steps* (e.g., go to bathroom; select own toothbrush, etc.) ___; *core steps* (e.g., brush teeth in circular motion, top, bottom, inside, outside) ___; *performance monitoring requirements* (e.g., check chin for tooth-paste) ___; *problem-solving steps* (e.g., use facecloth to wipe chin) ___; *associated* communication and social behaviors (e.g., wait until bathroom is free; request permission to use the bathroom) ___;

various methods nonhandicapped people use to perform routines* are identified ___; note rate ___, frequency ___, and duration ___ of responses; note commonly occurring problems associated with the routine (e.g., clerk temporarily called away; machine malfunction) ___;

note the number and type of training opportunities in each area ___; suitability of each area for training ___ (e.g., spatial-temporal ___ and social ___ factors);

note is made of behaviors that are not tolerated in the environments: (e.g., masturbation, self-stimulation, aggressiveness ___;)

environmental inventory data are collected by: teacher ___; parent ___, occupational ___, speech ___ and/or physical ___ therapists; the inventory is conducted by repeated ___ direct ___, unobtrusive observation ___ and/or repeated ___ participation ___; interviews are conducted with on-site personnel ___ and the general public ___.

Other: _____

_____

(d) *Community preparation*: meetings are held with representatives of potential community instructional environments ___; to explain the nature (frequency, duration, times) of the program ___; to explain the purpose ___ and philosophy ___ of the program ___; to describe, in positive terms, the nature of the students ___; to describe amount and type of supervision ___, liabilities ___, contact persons and their telephone numbers ___; where necessary or desirable, permission is sought to use the environment for instruction ___ for limited (specify) ___ or unlimited ___ periods of time ___; methods and opportunities for community representitives to provide feedback and express concerns are described ___; printed material describing the foregoing information is left with relevant community representatives ___.

Other: _____

_____

(e) *Environmental selection*: is based on: environmental inventory (see above) ___; preparation ___ and acceptance of community personnel (see above) ___; site is not overused as a training facility ___; natural proportions of handicapped and nonhandicapped people are maintained ___; objectives specified in students' IEPs ___; student skills and experience ___; student familiarity with the environment ___; similarity of environments to those that are/will be frequented by students ___; parental preferences ___; safety features ___; frequent opportunities ___ to interact with a variety ___ of nondisabled people ___; accessible by normalized transportation ___; unnecessary time is not wasted in transit to or from the site ___; acceptable cost factors ___; availability of site at desired times ___.

Other: _____

_____

Administrative Considerations

(a) *Legal*: legal liabilities are reviewed with legal department regarding: type of coverage and limitations of insurance ___ related to transportation ___ in public ___ and private ___ vehicles; on-site injury (accidental ___ or intentional ___), involving staff ___, students ___ and/or the public ___ as well as property damage ___; use of unaccompanied paraprofessionals in supervision ___ transportation ___ and instruction ___; need for professional liability insurance ___.

(b) *Financial*: staff are reimbursed for additional insurance coverage related to use of private vehicles and professional liability insurance ___.

(c) *Policy*: policy statements regarding the school district philosophy and rationale for community-based instruction are prepared ___;

procedures are written for: goal selection (transdisciplinary assessment and decision-making) ___; program design ___; program implementation ___, instructional ___ and behavior management ___ techniques (approved ___, restricted ___, or prohibited ___); supervision ___; data collection ___; student and program evaluation ___; program approval ___ and revision ___;

policies and procedural guidelines are written for: job descriptions ___, personnel evaluation ___, and staff development ___;

emergency procedures are written for health (accident, status epilepticus) ___, behavioral (e.g., violent) ___ problems and missing students ___;

policies are developed regarding procedures for insuring continuous availability of essential medical information ___, (e.g., relating to medications ___, allergies ___, physical and medical conditions ___, and emergency telephone numbers ___);

written policy and procedures are established for obtaining signed ___ program approval from community representatives ___; training ___ and supervisory ___ personnel, and parents ___; the nature of informed consent is defined regarding specification of instructional objectives ___; instructional ___ and assessment ___ procedures ___; location and duration of instruction ___; risks and liabilities ___; program philosophy ___ and supporting evidence ___; the IEP is signed ___;

procedures are established for amount ___, and nature ___ of supervision; nature of activities requiring approval ___ and supervision ___;

record-keeping policies and procedures are prepared relating to: IEP development and approval ___; frequency ___, duration and location ___ of instructional ___ and behavior management ___ methods employed; staff involved in various procedures ___; frequency and type of assessment ___; student progress data ___;

procedures are developed for reporting: the location of staff and students ___, whether in transit ___ or on-site ___; student ___ and staff absences ___, for part or all of a day ___; changes in schedule ___.

Other: _____

_____

(d) *Personnel* employed in community-based instruction: special ___ and regular ___ education teachers; vocational ___, music ___, physical ed. ___, and art ___ teachers; therapists: occupational ___, physical ___, speech ___; social workers ___; school nurses ___; senior citizens ___; college ___ or secondary school ___ practicum students; parents ___; volunteers ___; temporary ___ or permanent ___ collaboration and/or consultation of store clerks ___, bus drivers ___, waitresses ___, cashiers ___; peers tutors or buddies ___.

Training:

Teachers _____ T
Teaching assists _____ A
Therapists _____ Th
Parents _____ P
Others _____ O

	O	P	Th	A	T
– trained to teach type of students being taught	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to employ specific behavior management techniques being used	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to use specific instructional techniques being employed	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to collect, plot and interpret data	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in record keeping	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in philosophy and rationale of community-based instruction	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in techniques specific to community-based instruction	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in emergency procedures (first-aid, CPR ...)	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in district policies	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to work with people in other disciplines	—	—	—	—	—
– trained in public relations	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to supervise students	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to work without supervision	—	—	—	—	—
– being employed	—	—	—	—	—
– trained to teach specific techniques to other personnel	—	—	—	—	—

Other: _____

_____

Roles: therapists work with teachers on assessment ___, goal selection ___, equipment development ___, development of instructional/therapeutic techniques ___, and on-site training and supervision ___;

two or more teachers team-teach to permit flexibility of student grouping and rotating use of community training sites ___;

teachers and other personnel specialize in training students in specific environments ___;

instructional aides are assigned to a particular teacher ___ or training site ___; are trained to conduct hands-on training ___ with ___ or without ___ continuous supervision;

contact is made with teacher ___, paraprofessional ___ and other related unions or associations (occupational ___, physical ___, speech ___ therapists) regarding staff responsibilities ___ and liabilities ___; job descriptions are written to include off-campus responsibilities ___

Other: _____

_____

(e) *Transportation* is chosen, wherever possible, that is normalized ___, accessible ___, provided with appropriate safety devices ___; permits in-transit training opportunities ___; least expensive ___; and minimally time-consuming ___;

district school buses are rerouted to deliver students directly to and from the community training site without first going to a school ___;

teacher ___, parent ___ or volunteer ___ private vehicles are used (see section on legal considerations);

residential ___ and community agency ___ vehicles not in use during school hours are employed;

public transportation offers: discount passes ___, free travel during low use times ___, use of training vehicles ___, low cost bus rental ___, and/or volunteer, off-duty bus drivers ___;

consideration is given to the cost ___ convenience ___ and training opportunities ___ of alternative methods of travel, as well as to alternate means of travel in the event of unexpected problems or emergencies ____.

Other: _____

_____

Instructional Considerations

(a) *Program goals, objectives and IEPs* are selected on the basis of:

- ecological inventories of students' current and future ___, residential ___, vocational ___, educational ___ and recreational environments ___ and subenvironments ___;
- students have the opportunity to perform the skills often ___ in their daily lives ___, in many environments ___;
- transdisciplinary decisions of parents ___, guardians ___, teachers ___; occupational ___, speech ___ and physical ___ therapists; vocational specialists ___, and others _____;
- activities, settings, materials and equipment are chronologically age-appropriate ___;
- environments are least-restrictive ___ and maintain a natural proportion of disabled and nondisabled persons ___;
- given the constraints of time, personnel, the instructional situation, the students' entry level skills, and the rate and style of learning, it is likely the students will be able to acquire sufficient skills to achieve independent mastery ___ or participate partially to a satisfactory degree ___;

- the skills taught are related to basic health ___, safety ___, life maintenance ___ and quality of life ___;
- the skills taught will reduce dependency ___, enhance normalization ___, increase social acceptability ___, increase opportunity to learn additional skills ___, increase opportunity to interact with nondisabled people ___, increase opportunities to understand and express thoughts and feelings ___; increase opportunities to enjoy social-emotional-recreational life ___;
- *Social validity*: the rate ___, style of performing and perceived importance ___ of the skills taught ___ and the teaching procedures used ___ are considered to be appropriate by the general public ___, people in community environments in which instruction will be conducted ___; parents ___, students ___ and nonhandicapped peers ___.

(b) *Instructional Tasks* include mailing letters for family and school ___; dropping-off and picking-up family and staff clothing at a dry cleaners ___; washing family and group home laundry ___; preparing food for peers, staff and group home ___; purchasing food for family, staff, elderly people, and group homes ___; providing household and yard maintenance for group and family homes and the elderly ___.

(c) *Instructional Delivery*: instruction is individual ___, small group ___; concurrent (everyone instructed at same time) ___; sequential (students in group are individually taught in rotating sequence)___; incremental (group size is slowly increased) ___;

instruction is consecutive (skills are taught in school before moving to community)___; concurrent (skills are taught in school and community at the same time) ___, or exclusive (skills are taught only in the community) ___;

instruction is conducted in only one environment of a specific type (e.g., in one grocery store, or using one vending machine) ___ or concurrently ___ or successively ___ in several environments of the same type (e.g., in several grocery stores, or using several vending machines);

where instruction, management, or supervision is provided by someone other than the teacher, written guidelines describe all responsibilities ___, procedures ___, and policies ___; checklists ___ and logbooks ___ are also provided;

where instruction or management is provided by someone other than a teacher, procedural scripts are provided that describe the sequence of steps taken to implement a procedure ___; the scripts include a description of equipment ___, materials ___, physical arrangements ___, sample dialogue ___, prompts ___, reinforcers ___, and correction procedures ___.

(d) *Instructional Grouping*: grouping is homogeneous ___ or heterogeneous* ___; students differ on: level of intellectual functioning (severe, mild, moderate) ___, physical ability (wheelchair or ambulatory) ___, level of skills related to task ___, behavior management ___ and instructional ___ requirements;

the ratio of students to instructional personnel is: 1:1 ___, 2:1 ___, 3:1 ___, 4:1 ___, or 5:1 ___.

(e) *Instructional scheduling*: staggered schedule: different groups of students from the same ___ or different ___ classrooms are instructed in the community at different times (e.g., a.m. or p.m. M, W, and F) ___; or one group is instructed to criterion on a task before introducing another group ___;

schedules of therapists: occupational ___, speech ___ and physiotherapist ___ have been changed from short-term, school-based to long-term, community-based treatment ___; involves less ___, same ___ or more ___ direct contact time with students;

massed practice is scheduled for initial skill acquisition ___; when massed practice is used, the number of consecutive trials is selected to enhance rapid, consistent, and accurate responding ___ while avoiding fatigue and boredom ___; an appropriate frequency of distributed practice is scheduled to enhance skill maintenance ___; a suitable variety of instructional environments (representing the most difficult commonly found conditions ___, and the most common range of conditions ___) are used during instruction to facilitate skill generalization ___; sufficient practice is scheduled to acquire and maintain the ability to perform low frequency tasks of high importance ___;

a suitable duration and variety of instruction is scheduled to avoid fatigue and boredom ___; a variety of instructors are employed to enhance skill generalization ___ while maintaining essential continuity of instruction ___.

(f) *Planning an instructional schedule*: instructional schedules are developed following consideration of:

- number and type of staff available ___; frequency ___ and duration ___ of availability;
- students' instructional objectives ___; instructional needs: frequency ___, duration ___ and type of instruction required;
- environmental availability: times ___, duration ___;
- transportation: normalized ___, specialized ___; time required ___; instructional opportunities during transportation ___;
- time required for: staff breaks ___, preparation and clean-up ___, data collection ___, data analysis ___, meetings ___, and training ___;

- anticipate the problems: delayed transportation ___, community site not available ___, staff absent ___, students absent ___, and unsuitable weather ___;

(g) *Stimulus prompting: within stimulus prompting*: (student attention is drawn to natural cues by directly enhancing the salience of the discriminative feature of the cues, e,g., brightly color the forward and reverse darts on a tape recorder) ___.

Extra stimulus prompting: (different cues are added to draw student attention to the discriminative features, e.g., the teacher points to the forward and reverse darts on a tape recorder) ___.

Redundant cue prompting: a secondary cue is added to which the student can respond without attending to the natural cue (e.g., the forward key on a tape recorder is colored green while the stop key is colored red) ___.

Stimulus prompting is temporary ___ or permanent (an adaptation) ___.

Response prompting: antecedent prompting (errorless learning): verbal ___, gestural ___, modelling ___, and physical ___ prompts are used to direct student attention to natural cues ___ and to prompt the desired response to those cues.

To insure that one response in a chain cues the next response, student attention is drawn to the cues for the next step while she or he is completing the previous step ___.

Consequence prompting (increasing assistance): students are allowed to make a response without teacher guidance; if the student makes an incorrect response, assistance is provided ___.

(h) *Fading prompts*: the intensity of stimulus prompting is progressively reduced ___; response prompts are faded by: time delay (by increasing the duration of time between presentation of the natural cue and the response prompt) ___; by fading from a more to a less intrusive prompt (e.g., from physical to modeling to gestural to verbal prompts) ___; by proximity fading (progressively decreasing teacher-student proximity) ___.

(i) *Transfer stimulus control*: control is transferred from teacher prompts to natural cues by using fading as above ___ while focusing student attention on natural cues during each trial ___.

(j) *Cue discrimination training*: learners are taught to discriminate and not respond to cues that are commonly confused with natural response cues ___.

(k) *Motivational considerations*: scheduling: Premack scheduling (personally preferred activities are scheduled following less desirable

activities) ___; a variety of activities are scheduled ___; repeated trial practice to point of boredom and fatigue is avoided ___.

Interrupted responding: (e.g., a well established routine is briefly interrupted to teach a language concept; the opportunity to continue the routine may be motivating) ___.

Reinforcers: extrinsic: type ___, amount ___ and frequency ___ approximates natural reinforcers; extrinsic and natural reinforcers are always paired ___; learner attention is always drawn to natural consequences ___; extrinsic reinforcers are gradually faded to transfer stimulus control to natural reinforcers ___;

during initial instruction, 80% or more of responses are reinforced ___; reinforcers are dispensed in a nonstigmatizing manner ___;

extrinsic reinforcers have demonstrated reinforcing value to specific learner being taught ___;

natural reinforcers are identified through an environmental inventory (see above) ___.

(l) *Correction procedures*: consequence prompting is used (as above) ___; the student returns to steps previously performed correctly ___, attention is directed to natural cues ___ and the desired response is prompted ___.

Instruction employs both systematic ___ and direct instruction ___ as well as incidental instruction (explain) ___.

(m) *Selection of instruction/behavioral methods*: instructional and behavioral management techniques used are: the least intrusive ___; demonstrated most effective for the type of task and student involved ___; are best suited to the particular student(s) involved ___; are age-appropriate ___; normalized ___; not stigmatizing ___; enhance student dignity ___; are nonaversive ___; and are responsive to the social context in which training is conducted

Other: _____

_____

Notes

Specialized instructional environment: a controlled environment used for short-term, intensive training (e.g., permits repeated trial practice; more intrusive prompting; greater stimulus control); may also be used to cope with severe behavior disorders, may be located in a disused store or storage area in shopping center; area in church, community, or recreation centers).

Routines: skill sequences that begin with a natural cue and end with the achievement of a critical effect or function of the behavior. Tooth brushing is a routine having several components: *initiating cue*: when teeth are dirty after eating; *preparatory steps*: going to the washroom; getting toothpaste and brush; *core steps*: actually brushing teeth; *terminating steps*: putting the equipment away; and *associated behaviors*: social and communication.

Heterogeneous grouping: heterogeneous groups of students are sometimes easier to manage; ambulatory students can often assist students using wheelchairs; it is easier to focus on one student requiring intensive behavior management than if all students in the group require such programming; students requiring little instruction and supervision can practice skills while instruction is focused on students with greater instructional needs; higher level performers may serve as models for other students; students who have acquired a skill may teach other students and thereby enhance generalization.

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